

Round Goby WATCH



Photo Credit: David Jude

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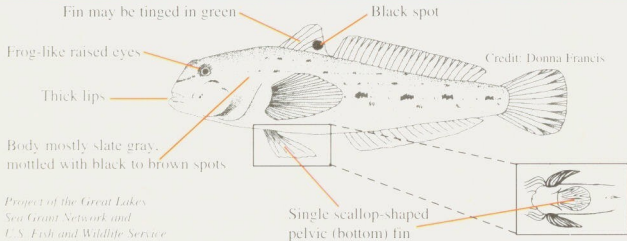
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How to Identify a Round Goby (adult shown)



General Characteristics

- **No other native fish in the Great Lakes has the single pelvic fin**
- **Young are solid slate gray**
- **Usually 3-6 inches (7.6 - 15.2 cm) long; may be up to 10 inches (25.4 cm)**

The Round Goby

The round goby may pose a serious threat to North American water ecosystems, with potential impacts on sport and commercial fishing. Since its discovery in the St. Clair River in 1990, this bottom-dwelling fish has rapidly spread to many areas of the Great Lakes. Once established, populations typically increase quickly. The round goby can displace native fish, eat their eggs and young, take over optimal habitat, spawn multiple times a season, and survive in poor quality water -- giving them a competitive advantage.

Anglers, commercial fishermen, and fishery professionals should know how to identify the round goby. Often, anglers are the first to discover round gobies because these aggressive fish are commonly caught by hook and line. Your help is vital to report new sightings and to prevent their spread.

What you can do

- Learn to identify the round goby (see back cover).
- Always drain water from your boat, livewell, and bilge before leaving any water access.
- Always dispose of your unwanted bait on land.
- Never dip your bait bucket into a lake or river if it has water in it from another.
- Never dump live fish from one body of water into another.
- **If you catch a round goby** in the Great Lakes or in other waters, kill it, freeze it, and call Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Extension in Zion, IL (847) 872-8677, the Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources Division of Fisheries in Des Plaines, IL (847) 294-4134, or the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife in Indianapolis, IN (317) 232-4094. *Do not throw it back alive!*

REMINDER: Know the rules!

Round goby specimens are needed to confirm sightings, but many Great Lakes jurisdictions have different rules regarding possession and transport. Always contact your local natural resource management agency for instructions. Never transport a live round goby.